



**AN ANALYSIS ON CONNOTATIVE MEANING IN ADAM  
LEVINE'S "LOST STARS" SONG LYRICS**

**A FINAL PROJECT**

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## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

The writer states sincerely that she compiles this project without doing plagiarism and without taking the results from other research in any university. Furthermore, the writer states that she does not take the material from other publications or someone's work except for the references mentioned in bibliography

Semarang, 28 June 2019

Rara Andira Febriantyas

## **MOTTO AND DEDICATION**

*“Fighting has been enjoined upon you while it is hateful to you. But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah Knows, while you know not.” – (Qur’an 2:216)*

This final project is dedicated to writer’s beloved parents, family, and friends.

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The author realizes that this project is still far from being perfect. Therefore, it will be glad to receive any constructive criticism and recommendation to make this final project gets better.

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# **An Analysis on Connotative Meaning in Adam Levine's "Lost Stars" Song Lyrics**

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## **ABSTRAK**

*Lagu merupakan bentuk kreasi dari manusia, bermaksud memberikan makna, untuk menyampaikan perasaannya. Ada bagian penting dalam lagu yaitu lirik. Kata-kata yang ditemukan pada lirik dapat dengan mudah dimengerti jika kita mengetahui metode yang digunakan untuk mencari makna pada objek tersebut. Semantik merupakan studi untuk mengartikan makna yang bisa kita kembangkan menjadi lebih spesifik. Pada studi ini penulis bertujuan untuk mencari makna konotatif pada lirik lagu Lost Stars oleh Adam Levine. Penulis menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dalam menemukan makna denotatif dan konotatifnya. Hasilnya, ditemukan sepuluh kata yang mengandung makna konotatif dan dua di antaranya memiliki makna yang sama.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Semantik, Makna Konotatif, Lirik Lagu, Lost Stars*

## **ABSTRACT**

Song is one of human creations, intended as a meaning, to express their feelings. There is important part of song called lyrics. The words in the lyrics might be found special meaning, such as connotative meaning. The meaning of the song lyrics can be simply understood when we know the method to discover the meaning of the object. Semantics is the study of meaning that we could use to develop more specified meanings. In this study, the author aims to look for the connotation meanings in the lyrics of Lost Stars song by Adam Levine. The author uses the descriptive qualitative approach in finding its denotative and connotative meaning. In result, the writer found ten words contained connotative meaning, including two words that have the same meaning.

**Keywords:** *Semantics, Connotative Meaning, Song Lyrics, Lost Stars*

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Background of Study**

Song is human creations intended to express their feelings. Through a song, human could express what they feel. Song also represents the culture that the music follower is used. The norm and moral values contained in lyrics are also delivered by song. The important thing that exists in a song is the lyrics. Song lyrics are the written form of expression about something that has been seen, heard, and experienced by anyone. In expressing the experience, the singer or the composer modifies the words and languages to make the interest and special characteristic of the lyrics.

To understand the meaning contained in a song, we must try to interpret the lyrics. The words in the lyrics might be found interesting because the words that the songwriter has chosen have special meaning. The meaning of the song lyrics could be understood when we know the method to discover the meaning of the object.

The songs that will be examined here is from Adam Levine's "Lost Stars". The song lyrics from this song could make the listeners wonder what the author wants to deliver since its lyrics have a fascinating choice of words.

This research mostly describes the words in Adam Levine's "Lost Stars" song that have connotative meaning according to the writer. The writer decided to focus solely on the composer's point of view.

## **1.2. Research Problems**

There are several problems that can be found throughout the song lyrics. The problems are listed as follows:

1. What are the words shown in Adam Levine's "Lost Stars" song lyrics that have connotative meaning?
2. How the connotations tribute to the messages conveyed in Adam Levine's "Lost Stars" song?

## **1.3. Objectives of Study**

This study aims to describe the connotative meaning found in Adam Levine's "Lost Stars" song lyrics and to mention the words that describe the connotative meaning shown in the lyrics of *Lost Stars*.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERARY REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

In analyzing the lyrics, the writer uses a theory from Semantics field in developing the connotative meaning. Semantics is the study of “the toolkit” for meaning. In this study, knowledge is encoded in the language vocabulary and in its system for developing more specified meanings to the highest level of sentence meanings. (Griffiths, 2006:1) In accordance with Palmer (2001: 1) semantics is the technical term used to refer to the study of meaning and since meaning is a part of language, semantics is part of linguistic. Semantics, traditionally, has included the study of meaning. This study can be used in analyzing the meaning of the lyrics of the songs because it deals with how people use the language to understand the meaning.

##### **1. Conceptual Meaning**

Leech (1974: 13) argued that it is nearly impossible to describe language without making a reference to the conceptual meaning; such is the importance and indispensability of it to language. Its importance to language comes from its uniquely sophisticated organization, comparable to similar organizations on the syntactic and phonological levels of language. Moreover, Leech also suggested that denotative meaning could also be referred to as 'cognitive' or 'conceptual' meaning (1974: 10-11). The meaning of denotative is directive, that is, the special

meaning in a sign, and the main point can be called as a representation of signified. Denotative meaning refers to the meaning of a word or an expression that is directly visible and understandable on the surface. Denotative meaning of 'boy' for instance is a young male of the human species (Udofot, 1998: 22).

## **2. Connotative Meaning**

Connotation is made when the writer means something else, something that might be hidden. According to Leech (1974: 12) connotative meaning is the communicative value that an expression has by virtue of what it refers to, over and above its purely conceptual content. The connotative meaning is related to the certain item it refers to. In the words of Udofot (1999: 22), connotative meaning relates to the kind of meaning the word or expression has a different meaning from its regular meaning. This is due to the association of feelings, attitudes, and colorings associated with a particular word or expression that make the mind of the listener aroused when a word or phrase is spoken. Thus, based on Udofot's opinion, it could be concluded that connotative meaning relates to the particularity of each individual differences of temperament, understanding, and experiences. Hence, it is 'classically unstable' and tends to be shaped by unique individual traits, which include education, culture, age, sex, etc. For instance, the word "December" might be interpreted as a "period of festivity" or as a "bad weather".

### **2.2. Previous Study**

Research on song lyrics has been conducted before by Zakie Asidiky (2014) on his paper entitled "The Interpretation of the Lyric Writers' Concept in Cold Play's *Viva la Vida* Song

Lyrics”. In his paper, Zakie focused on the concept of the songwriter in writing and narrating the *Viva La Vida* lyrics and to interpret the representation of the first-person narrator used in the lyric.

E.M. Rahayu (2010) in her paper entitled “Figures of Speech and Their Connotative Meaning in Song’s Lyrics *Killing Me Softly with His Song*” discussed about how the figures of speech used as one of the tools to deliver the message of the lyrics to listeners.

Mamduh Abidarda (2010) in his paper titled “A Connotative Meaning Analysis on The Word of Child in Five Lyrics of Songs” focused on finding the connotative the word of child by using Ronald Barther’s theory.

Different from the previous, Ayu Indra Nanik (2013) in her paper entitled “An Analysis on Religion Related Connotative Meaning of Javanese Song ‘*Tembang Dolanan*’ Lyrics Created by Sunan Kalijaga” concerned in connotative meaning and religious messages which are described words, phrases, and sentences referring to the mandates of Islam contained in *Tembang Dolanan* song lyrics.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Type of Research**

In conducting this research, the writer uses descriptive qualitative research, to achieve the aim intended through this research, that is to shed light on the denotative and connotative meaning in the song Lost Stars by Adam Levine. However, this research neither seeks to categorize or calculate the features, nor it tries to make a statistical analysis of what is observed. As suggested by Moeloeng (2002), descriptive qualitative emphasizes more on the process rather than the result. Hence, it is more descriptive and analytic-inductive.

#### **3.2. Type and Source of Data**

Since the data is written data, the writer uses the data collected from the lyrics by downloading from the source. The lyrics were downloaded from <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/adamlevine/loststars.html>

#### **3.3. Population & Sample**

The research populations in this paper are all of the words from the lyrics of Adam Levine's "Lost Stars" song. The writer used total sampling technique in order to get the samples. The samples are the words that contain connotative meaning.

#### **3.4. Method of Collecting Data**

The writer used non-participatory observation method as a method of collecting data to analyze this study. According to Sudaryanto (1993: 134), observation method or *TSBLC* (*Teknik Simak Bebas Libat Cakap*) uses non-participant observation since the researcher is not involved in the conversations of people talking to each other, and the researcher becomes a listener and should pay attention to what is being talked.

The writer also used note-taking technique because the writer will write down information that was directly taken from the song the writer trying to hear. In collecting the data, the writer used Adam Levine's song Lost Stars lyrics. The method used to collect data is by searching the lyrics from the Internet.

### **3.5. Method of Data Analysis**

In this research, the writer will use *Padan* method. According to Sudaryanto (1993: 3), *Padan* method is a method to examine or to find specific lingual unit with the determiner that does not become a part of the language associated. The writer will read and analyze the lyrics of this song, and then figure out the connotative meaning in this song.



## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

In this point, the writer provides the data analysis of each section of the song, and looking at the connotative meaning of words used in this section.

*Please don't see just a boy caught up in dreams and fantasies.*

First, the word “boy” in line 1 has denotative meaning as a male child. However, based on the context, the word “boy” has negative connotative. The word boy used in line 1 portrays an immature personality such as naivety and stupidity. Therefore, the composer chose the word “boy” to describe a male child who is always doing nothing to achieve his goal.

*Best laid plans; sometimes are just a one-night stand*

Another example we found, the phrase “one-night stand” in line 4 has positive connotation. Based on the context, the “one-night stand” phrase emphasizes that the composer believes sometimes the well-planned idea could happen in a sudden manner.

*I'll be damned; Cupid's demanding back his arrow.*

In line 5, the word “damned” means to have a punishment from God. This word has negative connotation. Looking at the context above, the composer expresses a complete surprise because the Cupid, as the God of Love, is not on his side.

*So let's get drunk on our tears.*

Looking at line 6, the word “drunk” means that when someone is losing control under the influence of alcohol or intoxicated. Sometimes, a drunken person cannot remember anything after being drunk.

However, the word “drunk” in line 6 has positive connotation. In Western culture, some people like to drink show how they take a break from stressful thought. When people drink, they tend to forget any stressful situations and enjoy being drunk. Therefore, the composer asks us to forget any stressful thought we have.

*And God, tell us the reason youth is wasted on the young*

The word “youth” in line 7, line 17, and line 25 the word youth means young people. This word has positive connotative association. The word “youth” implies a vibrant, lively, or energetic person. The word “young” has neutral connotative. In this line, the composer is questioning why young people’s lives are wasted and meaningless.

*It's hunting season and this lamb is on the run*

***We're searching for meaning***

Looking at line 8, line 9, line 18, line 19, line 26, and line 27, the word “hunting” means an activity for someone to chase or look for something. However, the word “hunting” has positive connotation. The word “meaning” above also has positive connotation. The word “meaning” above portrays life meaning. Based on the context, the composer expresses that he is still looking for self-identity just like people hunts for something.

***But are we all lost stars trying to light up the dark?***

The word “dark” in line 10, line 20, and line 28 means sad or without hope. The word “dark” has negative connotative meaning. Usually, since in some cultures the color of mourning is dark. When they feel or show deep sorrow or regret for someone or their death, typically by following conventions such as the wearing of black clothes. Looking back at the context, the composer describes the sadness by using the word “dark”.

***Turn the page; maybe we'll find a brand new ending***

***Where we're dancing in our tears***

The word “dancing” means to move the body and feet to the music. The word “dancing” has positive connotative meaning. Based on the context, the composer wants us to move on and believe that there will be possibility for a better life where we can enjoy everything even in any stressful situations.

In essence, this song has a message to deliver through the lyrics. It could be seen from the connotative meaning found in the song lyrics. This describes the composer is just an ordinary human who once did not felt a purpose in his life and lost his hope. He only caught up in his fantasies without doing anything to fix his problems in life. The composer is always questioning his existence in the world. However, life is like a page, it has a lot of stories in every page of our lives. In life, everything seems possible and also some circumstances could change in a sudden manner. Therefore, it makes the composer believes that we should enjoy our lives in dealing with all of the problems we have to find a way to a brand new self-identity.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

As a result, it could be concluded that there are so many connotative meaning found in the words and the phrases singers chose in the lyrics of the song "Lost Stars". The writer found ten words contained connotative meaning. In addition, some of the words in the song lyrics explain the same connotative meaning, such as "drunk" and "dancing". The connotative meaning found in the song lyrics could describe the journey of the composer facing his problem on searching for self-identity.

## APPENDIX

"Lost Stars" by Adam Levine

Please don't see just a boy caught up in dreams and fantasies.  
Please see me reaching out for someone I can't see.  
Take my hand, let's see where we wake up tomorrow.  
Best laid plans; sometimes are just a one-night stand.  
I'll be damned; Cupid's demanding back his arrow.  
So let's get drunk on our tears.

And God, tell us the reason youth is wasted on the young.  
It's hunting season and this lamb is on the run.  
We're searching for meaning...  
But are we all lost stars trying to light up the dark?

Who are we? Just a speck of dust within the galaxy.  
'Woe is me' if we're not careful turns into reality.  
Don't you dare let our best memories bring you sorrow.  
Yesterday I saw a lion kiss a deer.  
Turn the page; maybe we'll find a brand new ending.  
Where we're dancing in our tears.

And God, tell us the reason youth is wasted on the young.  
It's hunting season and this lamb is on the run.  
We're searching for meaning...  
But are we all lost stars trying to light up the dark?

I thought I saw you out there crying...  
I thought I heard you call my name...  
I thought I heard you out there crying...  
But just the same...

And God, tell us the reason youth is wasted on the young.  
It's hunting season and this lamb is on the run.  
Searching for meaning...  
But are we all lost stars trying to light up the dark?  
Are we all lost stars trying to light up the dark?

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